

On Top Of The News Email:[news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) website: [www.arubatoday.com](http://www.arubatoday.com) Tel:+297 582-7800 Monday, December 28, 2015

# Blown Away



## At Least 11 Die in Texas Tornadoes; 5 in Illinois Flooding

People assess the damage to a storage facility destroyed by Saturday's tornado in Garland, Texas, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015. Tornadoes that swept through the Dallas area caused substantial damage and at least 11 people died either from the storm or related traffic accidents and dozens of people were injured.

(N. Hunsinger/Dallas Morning News via AP)  
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**Donald Trump: Relying on, trying to control free coverage****JILL COLVIN****Associated Press****NEWARK, New Jersey (AP)**

Nobody understands the power of the media on public perception quite like Donald Trump. The former reality television star and tabloid king, who has relied on free news coverage and social media to power his presidential campaign, is uniquely obsessed with how the news media portray his events.

Trump routinely orders news camera operators to pan the crowds at his rallies to show how large the gatherings are — and then chastises them, with disgust, when they fail to obey. His team has experimented with event setups, often placing groups of supporters on risers behind the candidate so that cameras can't miss the carefully curated faces.

He's fumed over television reporters doing live shots from empty auditoriums once his supporters have left. And on Twitter, Trump is one of the most prolific media critics, offering his

live commentary on cable news reporters and analysts, lashing out at news outlets he feels have treated him unfairly. The approach is yet another

a sprinkling of radio ads. Instead, Trump has logged a whopping 22 hours and 46 minutes of free airtime from May 1 to December 15 on Fox News alone, according

co Rubio, combined. While other candidates spend their time at small-scale retail events interacting one-on-one with voters, Trump's campaign centerpiece is the large-scale rally, where he is greeted like a rock star by thousands of adoring — and increasingly boisterous — fans.

The events are often held in arenas and convention centers, with crowd sizes that dwarf his rivals' rallies — a fact he is never shy to point out.

"Nobody gets audiences like I get," Trump said at a rally in Michigan on Monday. "We broke the record. And I don't have a guitar, no guitar. Elton John said, 'You get the biggest crowds in the world for a guy without a guitar.'"

Despite Trump's off-the-cuff, tangent-filled speeches, the events are meticulously staged. Reporters receive laminated press credentials that include the date and city. At one rally earlier this month, held in a private airplane hangar, Trump staged a dramatic

entrance, pulling up to the open venue in his custom Boeing 757 airplane as the theme music from the movie "Air Force One" blared on loudspeakers. Entertainment has included live bands and DJs. Children are sometimes offered free helicopter rides.

The spectacle has created a legion of Trump fans who attend one event after the next to hear the candidate speak.

"This is better than a concert in the '70s," said Trump supporter Bill Kullander, ahead of a recent rally in Des Moines, Iowa — the fourth the 62-year-old had attended so far this year. In Grand Rapids, Michigan, on Monday, staunch supporters mixed with curious onlookers eager to see the Trump show in action.

"I just want to hear what he has to say," said Jim Rhodes of Belmont, Michigan. "Am I going to vote for him? Probably not. I like to refer to this as the second comedy show I've been to in my lifetime. The first one was Tim Allen. □



**Republican presidential candidate, businessman Donald Trump addresses supporters at a campaign rally in Grand Rapids, Mich.**  
(AP Photo/Carlos Osorio)

er aspect of Trump's unorthodox campaign. As other candidates and their affiliated super Political Action Committees have spent millions of dollars on expensive television ads, Trump's campaign has reported spending just \$300,000 on

to a tally by Media Matters for America, a liberal non-profit group. That's more than twice as much as any other candidate and more than some of his closest rivals, Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and Florida Sen. Mar-

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## At least 11 die in Texas tornadoes; 5 in Illinois flooding



**Damage of home buildings is seen after Saturday's tornado in Garland, Texas, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015. At least 11 people died and dozens were injured in apparently strong tornadoes that swept through the Dallas area and caused substantial damage this weekend.**

(G.J. McCarthy/Dallas Morning News via AP)

**DAVID WARREN**  
**Associated Press**

**GARLAND, Texas (AP) —**

At least 11 people died and dozens were injured in apparently strong tornadoes that swept through the Dallas area and caused substantial damage this weekend, while five people died in a flash flood in Illinois. It was the latest in a succession of powerful weather events across the country — from heavy snow in New Mexico, west Texas and the Oklahoma Panhandle — to flash flooding in parts of the Plains and Midwest. Days of tumultuous weather have led to 34 deaths overall — those in Texas and Illinois, plus 18 total in Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and Arkansas.

The full extent of damage along a nearly 40-mile (64-kilometer) stretch near Dallas isn't yet known, though there were reports of storms and tornadoes blowing the roofs off homes, mangling vehicles, damaging churches, downing power lines and toppling trees.

National Weather Service survey teams headed out Sunday to determine the number and strength of the tornadoes. Meteorologist Matt Bishop says the tornado outbreak at this time of the year for North Texas occurs "from time to

time ... but it's certainly not something that happens regularly."

In the town of Rowlett, City Manager Brian Funderburk said Sunday morning that 23 people were injured, but that there were no deaths and no reports of missing people. The weather service said damage indicated it was likely an EF-3 tornado, which has winds up to 165 mph (266 kph). In some instances, it looked like homes had been picked up and set back down in a big pile. State troopers were blocking off roads, utility crews were restoring power and people walking around hushed and dazed.

In nearby Garland, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northeast of Dallas, Lt. Pedro Barineau said Sunday morning that eight people have died and 15 were injured. The weather service said it was an EF-4 tornado, which is the second-most powerful with winds up to more than 200 mph (320 kph).

"This is a huge impact on our community and we're all suffering," he said of Garland, where about 600 structures were damaged, the majority of which were single-family homes. "Driving around the area, you can see that it's total devastation."

Barineau said the tornado hit about 6:45 p.m. across an area of 2 square miles (5.2 square kilometers). At least three people who died were found in vehicles, said Barineau.

Three other people died in Collin County, about 45 miles (72.4 kilometers) northeast of Dallas, according to sheriff's deputy Chris Havey, although the circumstances were not immediately clear.

On the other side of Texas, a snowstorm accompanied by plunging temperatures, was expected to leave up to 16 inches (41

centimeters) of snow in West Texas, much of New Mexico and parts of northwest Oklahoma through Sunday evening, according to NWS meteorologist Brendon Rubin-Oster in College Park, Maryland.

Police in Albuquerque, New Mexico, said the snow caused 178 weather-related accidents by Saturday night, with about 58 involving people with injuries. Officials also shut down a stretch of Interstate 40 leading to the Texas border because of hazardous driving conditions. The National Weather Service said snow

drifts more than 7 feet (2.1 meters) high have been reported.

A southwestern Illinois coroner said three adults and two children drowned when the vehicle they were riding in was swept away and sank in a rain-swollen creek at about 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

In the Southeast, two more deaths linked to weather were reported Saturday in Mississippi, bringing that state's death toll from severe weather over Christmas to 10. Late Saturday, one death was reported in Alabama. □

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## Relatives of 2 killed by Chicago police demand changes



LaTarsha Jones, center, the daughter of Bettie Jones, is comforted by family and friends during a news conference on Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015, in front of the house where Bettie Jones was killed Saturday in the West Garfield Park neighborhood of Chicago. Grieving relatives and friends of two people shot and killed by Chicago police said Sunday that the city's law enforcement officers had failed its residents.

(Nancy Stone/Chicago Tribune via AP)

MICHAEL TARM  
Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Grieving relatives and friends of two people shot and killed by Chicago police said

Sunday that the city's law enforcement officers had failed its residents.

Quintonio LeGrier, 19, was killed early Saturday by police responding to a domestic disturbance, along with downstairs neighbor Bettie Jones, 55, police said.

Jones was hit accidentally by the gunfire, the police

said. Both victims were black.

The shootings come amid ongoing scrutiny of police across the country after a series of deaths of African-Americans at the hands of officers gave rise to the Black Lives Matter protest movement. The Chicago Police Department also is under a federal civil rights investigation that will look into patterns of racial disparity in the use of force, how the department disciplines officers and handles misconduct accusations. That investigation was launched after last month's release of police dashboard camera video showing white officer Jason Van Dyke shooting black 17-year-old Laquan McDonald 16 times in 2014. The video's release has led to protests, the forced resignation of Chicago Police Superintendent Garry McCarthy and calls from residents for Mayor Rahm Emanuel to step down. It is not clear whether there are any video recordings of Saturday's shootings.

Jacqueline Walker, a friend of Jones, asked why police "shoot first and ask questions later." Police should use stun guns or other nonlethal methods instead, Walker said at a news conference outside the West Side residence where the victims lived. Officers who responded to an emergency call "were confronted by a combative subject resulting in the

discharging of the officer's weapon," the Chicago Police Department said in a statement Saturday.

"The 55-year-old female victim was accidentally struck and tragically killed," according to the statement, which extended "deepest condolences to the victim's family and friends."

Jones, a mother of five who had hosted family for Christmas, and LeGrier, a college student home for the holiday break, were pronounced dead at hospitals, according to relatives and the Cook County medical examiner's office.

LeGrier's mother, Janet Cooksey, told reporters that the Chicago Police Department has failed her and so many others. She said she has seen other families who lost their loved ones to police shootings, and now it has happened to her. Speakers at the news conference said Mayor Rahm Emanuel needs to improve the situation with police, but others who spoke called for him to resign. Police did not immediately disclose the race of the officer, saying only that the officers involved will be placed on administrative duties for 30 days while

"training and fitness for duty requirements can be conducted." It isn't clear how many officers responded, how many used their firearms and how many times both LeGrier and Jones were struck. □

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**Family:****Charges unlikely in killing of Tamir Rice by police**

Demonstrators block Public Square in Cleveland, during a protest over the police shooting of 12-year-old Tamir Rice. Nearly 400 days after a police officer fatally shot Rice in an encounter captured on surveillance video, the boy's disillusioned family believes it's unlikely anyone will be indicted.

(AP Photo/Tony Dejak)

**MARK GILLISPIE**  
**Associated Press**

**CLEVELAND (AP)** — Nearly 400 days after a white police officer fatally shot a black 12-year-old carrying a pellet gun in an encounter captured on surveillance video, the boy's disillusioned family believes it's unlikely anyone will be indicted.

A decision on whether to charge the officer or his partner in the death of Tamir Rice — one of the higher-profile cases of black deaths at the hands of police that have roiled cities across the U.S. — could come any day. The grand jury making the decision has been meeting since mid-October.

The video shows patrolman Timothy Loehmann, a rookie at the time, shooting the boy in an instant as the cruiser driven by patrolman Frank Garmback skids to a stop on Nov. 22, 2014. Rice died the next day during surgery, and his family has repeatedly questioned why the case has dragged on.

Subodh Chandra, a Cleveland attorney who represents the Rice family in a federal civil rights lawsuit over the shooting, said he has resigned himself to the belief that the officers, both white, won't be indicted.

"This is apparently how long it takes to engineer

denying justice to a family when the video of the incident clearly illustrates probable cause to charge the officer," Chandra said. Unlike criminal trials, in which prosecutors must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt for a conviction, the burden of proof for an indictment is much lower. The grand jury would have to decide only that a crime might have been committed to indict the officers.

Activists used an obscure state law in June to petition a Cleveland judge to charge the officers. The judge ruled there was probable cause to charge Loehmann with murder and Garmback with reckless homicide based on the video, but he said the decision on criminal charges should be left to prosecutors.

The lead agency investigating the shooting, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Office, turned over its findings in June to county prosecutor Tim McGinty.

Investigations and grand jury decisions in other high-profile deaths of blacks in encounters with police have come much faster. It took about three months from the time Michael Brown was fatally shot in Ferguson, Missouri,

for a grand jury to decide against charges. A grand jury indicted six police officers in Baltimore three weeks after the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody.

McGinty spokesman Joe Frolik attributed the lengthy investigation in Tamir's case to the office being "careful and thorough."

Grand jury proceedings are supposed to be secret, but McGinty has released expert reports and investigative documents to the media and public while citing his desire for transparency in how the case is being handled.

On the day Rice was shot, a man drinking a beer and waiting for a bus outside a recreation center called

the emergency dispatcher to report that a man was waving a gun and pointing it at people. Tamir lived across the street from the recreation center and went there to play nearly every day.

The man told the emergency call taker that the holder of the gun was likely a juvenile and that the gun probably wasn't real. The call taker never passed that information to the dispatcher who gave Loehmann and Garmback the high-priority call.

When the cruiser arrived, the vehicle skidded on wet grass and stopped within feet of the boy. Authorities say Loehmann shot Rice less than two seconds after opening the cruiser door. □

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## Chinese medicinal herbs provide niche market for US farmers

MARY ESCH  
Associated Press

**DELMAR, N.Y. (AP)** — Expanding interest in traditional Chinese medicine in the United States is fostering a potentially lucrative new niche market for farmers who plant the varieties of herbs, flowers and trees sought by practitioners.

While almost all practitioners still rely on imports from China, dwindling wild stands there, as well as quality and safety concerns, could drive up demand for herbs grown in the U.S. Several states have set up "growing groups" to help farmers establish trial stands of the most popular plants.

"As a farmer, I love the idea of growing something no one else is growing, something that's good for people," said Rebekah Rice of Delmar, near Albany, who is among 30 members of a New York growing group. "This project is seriously fascinating."

Jean Giblette, a researcher who has established New York's group, said it could also be a money-maker. She estimates the market for domestically grown medicinal plants to be \$200 million to \$300 million a year.

Traditional Chinese medicine is gaining mainstream acceptance in the U.S. There are 30,000 licensed practitioners across the country — 46 states issue licenses, often requiring a master's degree and con-



**Rebekah Rice, left, and Jean Giblette examine seedlings of trees used in Chinese herbal medicine, after Giblette brought them to Rice's greenhouse for the winter in Delmar, N.Y.** Rice, an organic farmer, is participating in a project launched by Giblette to foster medicinal herbs as a profitable niche crop for small farmers. Giblette estimates the market for domestically grown medicinal plants to be \$200 million to \$300 million a year.

(AP Photo/Mary Esch)

tinuing education credits. In 2014, the Cleveland Clinic opened one of the first hospital-based Chinese herbal therapy clinics in the country.

Jamie Starkey, a licensed practitioner of acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine at the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Integrative Medicine, said quality, authenticity and purity are important concerns with herbal products.

"If growers in the U.S. can produce a highest-quality product that is identical

to species from China, without contamination from heavy metals or pesticides, I think it's a great opportunity for farmers," Starkey said.

More than 300 plants are commonly used in traditional Chinese medicine. Giblette and Peg Schafer, an herb grower in Petaluma, California, compiled a list of marketable species for U.S. farmers. They include Angelica dahurica, a flowering perennial whose root is used to relieve pain and inflammation; Aster tataricus, a

relative of garden asters said to have anti-bacterial properties; Mentha haplocalyx, a mint used for stomach ailments; and Salvia miltiorrhiza, a type of sage whose roots are used for treatment of cardiovascular diseases. The National Institutes of Health says traditional Chinese medical techniques — which included practices such as acupuncture and Tai Chi — are primarily used as a complement to mainstream medicine. The agency cautions that some medicinal herbs can

have serious side effects, and there isn't enough rigorous scientific evidence to know whether traditional Chinese medicine works for the conditions it treats. Clinical trials are difficult because treatments involve combinations of plants customized for each patient.

Giblette, who started High Falls Foundation in New York's Hudson Valley in 2008 to foster research and conservation of medicinal plants, said growing under conditions similar to a plant's natural habitat is one of the keys to producing high quality medicinal plants. The foundation will provide the plants so it can ensure the authenticity of species and market products only to licensed herbal practitioners.

Market research shows high demand and low supply, said Rob Glenn, chairman of the nonprofit Blue Ridge Center for Chinese Medicine in Pilot, Virginia. "The current herbs from China are not of the quality they once were and U.S. practitioners indicate they are willing to pay a premium price for herbs grown with organic principles, locally, with high efficacy," he said. Using an economic development grant from the Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission, the Blue Ridge Center is enlisting local farmers to grow medicinal herbs that the center will process and sell to licensed practitioners. □

## World's busiest airport welcomes 100 millionth passenger

**ATLANTA (AP)** — Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport said it hit a major milestone Sunday. The airport that calls itself the world's busiest an-

nounced on its social media sites said it served its 100 millionth passenger this year. That makes it the first single airport to serve that number of passengers in

one calendar year. The passenger earning the distinction is Larry Kendrick of Gulfport, Mississippi, who will receive a Nissan Altima, two free Delta round trip

plane tickets and a \$500 gift card. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed welcomed a surprised Kendrick, who walked down a red carpet as journalists and onlookers

recorded the moment. Hartsfield-Jackson general manager Miguel Southwell says the airport had a 5 percent increase in passenger counts this year. □



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## Sale of ski resorts won't happen by year's end, trust says

DAVID SHARP

Associated Press

**PORTRLAND, Maine (AP)** — A real estate investment trust that's selling more than a dozen ski resorts from Maine to California won't meet its deadline of completing the transaction by year's end.

CNL Lifestyle Properties, which is based in Orlando, Florida, has sold its senior housing portfolio, a dozen marinas, four attractions, and the Mount Washington Hotel and Bretton Woods ski area in New Hampshire. But it continues to seek buyers for 15 additional ski resorts, remaining attractions and marinas, and says it will update shareholders in the first quarter of the new year.

The real estate investment

trust "continues to evaluate strategic options for the remainder of its ski and mountain properties as it seeks to provide liquidity to its shareholders," CNL Financial Group senior managing director Steve Rice said in a statement.

REITs are an investment vehicle for a variety of properties including hotels, office buildings and malls. The trust owns the property and makes money from leases and rent.

CNL Lifestyle Properties is trying to sell ski resorts including Sunday River and Sugarloaf in Maine, Loon Mountain and Mount Sunapee in New Hampshire, Okemo Mountain in Vermont, Crested Butte in Colorado, Brighton in Utah and Sierra-at-Tahoe in Cali-



Skiers and snowboarders ride a lift up a mountain on Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2015, at Snoqualmie Pass, Wash. A real estate investment trust that's selling more than a dozen ski resorts from Maine to California won't meet its deadline of completing the transaction by year's end.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

fornia.

Skiers won't see a big impact from the sale. Long-term leases will remain in place, so mountain operators will remain unchanged

parks, ski resorts, marinas and senior housing developments. But the value has dropped in the aftermath of a real estate downturn. The drought in the West hasn't helped. CNL told shareholders that its ski holdings last season were "negatively impacted by adverse conditions," particularly in California, which saw its third straight season of record-breaking drought.

The improving weather out west — which has seen snow this month — may set investors and potential buyers at ease, said Michael Krongel from Mirus Resort Capital in Burlington, Massachusetts, who's been involved in buying, selling and developing ski resorts for 45 years. □



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## IS puts up heavy fight to slow Iraqi troop advance on Ramadi



Iraqi Security forces enter the heavily damaged downtown Ramadi, 70 miles (115 kilometers) west of Baghdad, Iraq, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015. Islamic State fighters are putting up a tough fight in the militant-held city of Ramadi, slowing down the advance of Iraqi forces, Gen. Ismail al-Mahlawi, head of the Anbar military operations, said Sunday.

capital, which was captured by IS militants in May, but after an initial push across the Euphrates River, their progress stalled.

Gen. Ismail al-Mahlawi, head of the Anbar military operations, told The Associated Press that the advance was hampered by suicide bombers, snipers and booby traps.

Iraqi troops will "need days" to get to the city's central government complex, said al-Mahlawi, adding that the troops were about one kilometer (half mile) from the complex on Sunday.

Al-Mahlawi said he could neither confirm nor deny media reports that IS fighters had pulled out of the government complex by nightfall Sunday. But he cited residents in the area as telling his troops that the

IS militants had withdrawn from the neighborhood of Albu Alwan, adjacent to the complex.

Another officer said the Iraqi army has yet to gain full control of a single Ramadi neighborhood. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

On Tuesday, Iraqi security forces reported progress in recapturing some areas in the western city of Ramadi, 130 kilometers (80 miles) west of Baghdad, from IS militants.

The extremists control large swaths of land in western and northern Iraq and in neighboring Syria. The IS group has declared a self-styled caliphate on the territory under its control.

After overrunning Ramadi, IS destroyed all the bridges around the city. It also demolished the Anbar operations command center and fanned out into the city's residential areas to set up less conspicuous centers of command.

A statement late Sunday from the Iraqi joint command said the operation in Anbar is going according to plans and that Iraqi forces continue to encircle the government complex in Ramadi. It made no mention of any pullout of IS militants from the area. □

QASSIM ZAHRA  
Associated Press  
BAGHDAD (AP) — Islamic State fighters are putting up a tough fight in the militant-held city of Ramadi, slowing down the advance of Iraqi forces, a senior Iraqi

commander said Sunday. Iraq launched the long-awaited operation to retake the Anbar provincial

## North African al-Qaida: Top figure killed in ambush

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — A leading figure of the North African affiliate of al-Qaida has been killed in an ambush by Algerian soldiers, one of 109 terrorists killed by Algerian security forces in 2015, the country's Defense Ministry said Sunday. Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, or AQIM, said that Abu al-Hassan Rachid al-Bulaydi, head of

the Sharia Committee, was killed on Friday "as a result of an insidious ambush by the apostates," according to a statement translated by the SITE Intelligence Group. The statement said he was killed in the Tizi Ouzou region east of Algiers. The Algerian Defense Ministry said late Friday that two "dangerous terrorists" had been killed that after-

noon near Azeffoun, in the northeast of the Tizi Ouzou region but didn't fully identify them.

The ministry statement said the two had been members of terrorist groups since 1994, three years after the start of a bloody Islamist insurgency in Algeria.

AQIM grew out of the Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat and changed its

name when it joined the al-Qaida network in 2007 under the leadership of Abdelmalek Droukdel, who is believed to be holed up in the mountainous Tizi Ouzou region while overseeing a southern front in the Sahel.

The once-feared AQIM is now blamed for sporadic attacks in Algeria, often targeting soldiers in the Tizi Ouzou region. □

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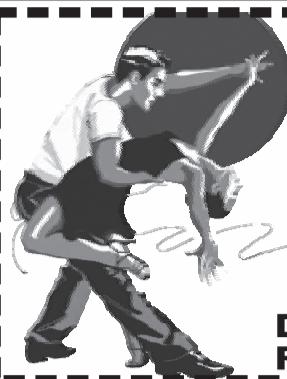
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## UK military helps combat flooding as it spreads to cities

GREGORY KATZ

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister David Cameron sent hundreds more troops into northern England on Sunday to help exhausted residents and emergency workers fight back rising river waters that have inundated towns and cities after weeks of heavy rain.

Cameron said the flooding is "unprecedented" and vowed to do everything possible to protect people and their property as the damage spread to the major cities York, Leeds and Manchester. He said protective systems and contingency plans will be reviewed because the frequency of such extreme weather events seems to be on the rise.

Weeks of persistent rainfall has saturated the ground and swollen the rivers to record levels, leaving entire swathes of northern England, and smaller parts of Wales and Scotland, vulnerable. Several hundred flood warnings remain in effect.

There have been no fatalities or serious injuries reported, but hundreds of people have been evacuated from houses and apart-

ments in York, 200 miles (320 kilometers) north of London, where 3,500 properties are judged to be at risk. Emergency crews worked extra shifts to try to restore power to roughly 7,500 blacked out homes in the greater Manchester and Lancashire areas.

Environment Secretary Liz Truss said flood protection systems put in place in recent years were unable to cope with the record-high river levels.

"In Lancashire every single river was at a record-high," she said. "In Yorkshire we have seen some rivers a meter (yard) higher than they have ever been before. Clearly, in the light of that, we will be reviewing our flood defenses."

Several hundred people had been evacuated the day before in the West Yorkshire and Lancashire regions and officials said thousands had lost power. The number of people affected continues to grow as flooding spreads and impacts cities as well as villages and towns.

A picturesque 200-year-old pub, The Waterside, in the greater Manchester area, collapsed and part of the structure was swept away by the River Irwell. Rising



Members of a Mountain Rescue team check on properties after the River Foss and Ouse burst their banks, in York, England, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015. Hundreds more people were told to leave their homes in northern England Sunday as Prime Minister David Cameron said more troops would be deployed to protect peoples' lives and property after weeks of heavy rainfall caused widespread flooding.

(Anna Gowthorpe/PA via AP)

river levels also threatened downtown Manchester and police dealt with a ruptured gas main and

small fire believed to have been caused by the flooding.

The Environment Agency

urged residents to remain vigilant because more "severe" flooding is expected overnight and Monday. □

### Spain deploys aircraft to combat wildfires

MADRID (AP) — The government says it has deployed firefighting aircraft to combat over 40 wildfires in remote mountaintop locations in northern and central Spain amid unseasonably warm weather and low rainfall.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment said in a statement Sunday it has sent specialist aircraft to the regions of Asturias and Avila in a bid to douse outbreaks there.

The regional government of northern Cantabria said fire crews were combatting some 25 fires while the government of northwest Asturias said half of the 16 fires within its boundaries were being brought under control Sunday.

Low rainfall during a warm autumn season has left some of Spain's main reservoirs less than a third full, with one supplying Almeria at only 9.4 percent of its total capacity. □

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## China's legislature OKs controversial anti-terrorism law

**BEIJING (AP)** — China's rubber-stamp national legislature on Sunday approved the country's first anti-terrorism law, amid concerns that its requirements that tech companies share information with the government could hurt

business interests and further infringe upon human rights. The National People's Congress said its standing committee adopted the law with a unanimous vote. The law goes into effect Jan. 1. Rights advocates and for-

eign governments, including Washington, have expressed concerns about the law's likely impact on tech businesses and freedom of speech. They say it is troublesome that telecommunications companies and Internet

service providers are required to share encryption keys and back-door access with the police and state security agents seeking to prevent terrorist activities or investigating terror acts. Chinese officials said Sunday that the require-

ments for the tech firms are necessary because terrorists are increasingly turning to cyberspace. They said lawmakers balanced the needs to fight terrorism and to protect business interests and public rights.□

## Pakistani army chief visits Kabul to discuss peace talks



Afghan Foreign Minister Salahuddin Rabbani listens to a reporter's question in Islamabad, Pakistan. Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed on Sunday to meet with U.S. and Chinese officials in the first weeks of the new year to discuss "peace-related issues," a move that could re-invigorate a stalled peace process with the Taliban, the Afghan president's office said.

(AP Photo/Anjum Naveed)

**LYNNE O'DONNELL**

**MUNIR AHMED**

**Associated Press**

**KABUL, Afghanistan (AP)** —

Afghanistan and Pakistan agreed on Sunday to meet with U.S. and Chinese of-

ficials in the first weeks of the new year to discuss "peace-related issues," a move that could re-invigorate a stalled peace process with the Taliban, the Afghan president's office

said.

The development came as Pakistan's powerful army chief Gen. Raheel Sharif met with senior officials in the Afghan capital, including President Ashraf

Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

The visit focused on the possible revival of peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, which stalled this summer. The Taliban have been waging a vicious insurgency since the 2001 U.S.-led invasion overthrew their regime.

According to Pakistan's military spokesman Lt. Gen. Asim Saleem Bajwa, the army chief had travelled to Kabul with "sincerity and optimism" about the peace process and also planned to discuss better border management between the two neighbors.

Bilateral ties had suffered in recent months, and Ghani has lately blamed Pakistan for much of the violence in Afghanistan, saying Islamabad supports and harbors the Taliban in Pakistani cities close to the Afghan border — a

charge Pakistan denies. Then, two weeks ago, a regional conference in Islamabad called for the resumption of the Afghan-Taliban peace negotiations. Ghani attended the meeting, as well as U.S. and Chinese representatives. Washington and Beijing have a keen interest in moving the peace dialogue forward.

The Taliban-Kabul talks have been on hold since July, when Afghanistan announced the death of Taliban leader Mullah Mohammad Omar and the Taliban called off its participation. A subsequent power struggle and clashes between rival Taliban factions have raised questions as to who will represent the insurgents if the talks with Kabul are revived. But analysts have cautioned that despite the rapprochement, any substantive talks are still months off.□

## Taiwan presidential front-runner: Can't 'be bound' to China

**JOHNSON LAI**  
**Associated Press**

**TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)** — The front-runner in Taiwan's presidential race said Sunday that she would seek stable relations with mainland China, but did not rule out revisiting the island's official stance on independence, leaving open questions about

how China would respond to her probable victory in next month's elections. Tsai Ing-wen, the opposition leader who has firmly held onto a sizeable lead in polls, used her platform during the first debate to warn against the political rapprochement and deepening economic ties with the mainland brought

by the ruling Nationalist Party, or KMT, since the 2008 elections.

"We cannot simply be bound to China," Tsai said. "That's what worries us most about the past eight years — the sense that that's the only choice we have. That's not good for our economy or our security."

Against the backdrop of a sputtering economy and rising anti-mainland sentiment, the Jan. 16 elections have been framed by both the KMT and the opposition Democratic Progressive Party as a referendum on President Ma Ying-jeou's China policy. Ma backed — with varying degrees of success — sev-

eral trade pacts with the mainland during his two terms and held a historic summit in November with Chinese President Xi Jinping. It was the first such meeting since the Chinese Communist Party defeated the KMT in China's civil war and established the People's Republic of China in 1949.□

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## Brazil fears birth defects linked to mosquito-borne virus

ADRIANA LICON

Associated Press

**RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)** — In the early weeks of Angelica Pereira's pregnancy, a mosquito bite began bothering her. At first it seemed a small thing. But the next day she awoke with a rash, a headache, a fever and a burning in her eyes. The symptoms disappeared within four days, but she fears the virus has left lasting consequences. Pereira's daughter Luiza was born in October with a head more than an inch (3 centimeters) below the range defined as healthy by doctors, a rare condition known as microcephaly that often results in mental retardation. A neurologist soon gave Pereira and her husband more bad news: The brain damage had caused cerebral palsy.

"My heart stopped. All I kept thinking about was all the struggles and discrimination my baby will suffer," said Pereira, a 20-year-old seamstress who lives in Santa Cruz do Capibaribe, a small, garment-manufacturing city in northeast Brazil.

More than 2,700 babies have been born in Brazil with microcephaly this year, up from fewer than 150 in 2014. Brazil's health officials say they're convinced the jump is linked to a sudden outbreak of

the Zika virus that infected Pereira, though international experts caution it's far too early to be sure and note the condition can have many other causes. Brazil alone estimates it's

beginning of an epidemic in a country that has in between 200,000 and 300,000 births per year, which shows how worried we are. It's a virus we don't know that much

pregnant during the rainy season when mosquitoes are most prevalent.

"All the women I see at the hospital or in my office who are pregnant or wanting to get pregnant

related to microcephaly. Suspicion arose after officials recorded 17 cases of central nervous system malformations among fetuses and newborns after a Zika outbreak began last year in French Polynesia, according to the European Center for Disease Prevention and Control.

And in November, Brazilian researchers reported the Zika virus genome had been found in amniotic fluid samples from two women whose fetuses were diagnosed with microcephaly by ultrasound exams. Brazil announced on Nov. 28 that researchers had found the Zika virus present in brain tissue of a newborn with microcephaly who died.

As more evidence arose from further Brazilian tests, PAHO and the World Health Organization recently urged officials in the Americas to watch for possible neurological problems or congenital malformations elsewhere related to cases of Zika.

While there's never before been a detected link between the virus and microcephaly, "there has never been an epidemic of Zika in the proportions that we are looking at now in Brazil," said Pedro Fernando Vasconcelos, a researcher at Evandro Chagas Institute who found the virus in the newborn child. □



**Dejalison Arruda holds his daughter Luiza at their house in Santa Cruz do Capibaribe, Pernambuco state, Brazil. Luiza was born in October with a rare condition, known as microcephaly. Luiza's mother Angelica Pereira was infected with the Zika virus after a mosquito bite. Brazilian health authorities are convinced that Luiza's condition is related to the Zika virus that infected her mother during pregnancy.**

(AP Photo/Felipe Dana)

already had between 440,000 and 1.3 million cases of Zika since the first local transmission of the virus was detected in May. The mosquito-borne disease was first identified in the Americas less than two years ago and has spread rapidly across South and Central America.

"We are looking at the

about," said Rodrigo Stabeli, vice president of the Rio de Janeiro-based Fiocruz research institute. "We are preparing for the unknown."

Brazilians are so concerned that some obstetricians, such as Helga Monaco at Sao Paulo's Samaritano Hospital, recommend women avoid becoming

are very alarmed, almost panicky," she said.

The Zika virus, first detected in humans about 40 years ago in Uganda, has long been seen as a less-painful cousin to dengue and chikungunya, which are spread by the same Aedes mosquito. Until a few months ago, investigators had no reported evidence it might be

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# LOCAL Aruba TODAY

## New Busses Arrive at De Palm Tours



--De Palm Tours is proud to announce the arrival of 6 new busses. They all come with the latest features like a rear and cabin camera, Wi-Fi, LED lights and more. The tour operator expects one more bus in 2016 which has a lift for wheelchair passengers.

ORANJESTAD – De Palm Tours is very happy with the extension of their fleet making it a total of more than 30 busses. The new busses (Volvo B7R) each have 52 seats with seatbelts and adjustable backs to rest after a long flight. A windshield electronic display will show guests where the bus is going, good for



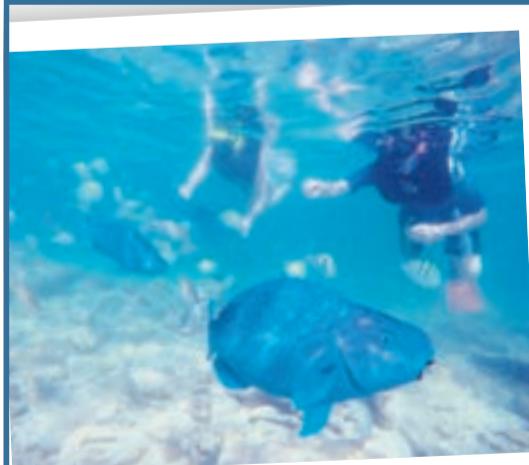
busy days at the airport or for private group functions. Inside the bus are two screens to inform passengers about Aruba's tours & activities or can provide a specific announcement for

a private group related to their stay on the island. A rear and inside camera make it possible for the bus driver to see what's happening inside and behind the bus. An integrated A/C



system will keep the passengers cool, but it is also possible to open up the windows. The colorful interior will make each guest feel welcome on One Happy Island Aruba. Formore than 55 years De Palm Tours provides trans-

portation to Aruba's visitors from the airport to their hotel and back. Beside airport transfers other activities like island tours, off-road safaris and sailing & snorkeling trips are offered. For more information please visit [www.depalmours.com](http://www.depalmours.com). □



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## TEDxCuracao is set for March 2016

**WILLEMSTAD** - The TEDx-platform stands for Ideas worth spreading and Actions worth doing. This only makes sense if collaboration is there as well; to share information and grow together. TEDxAruba is very proud to

have found collaboration grounds with TEDxCuracao, our direct neighbor island in the Caribbean. Aruba and Curacao are facing the same challenges and we can learn from each other's best practices and failures made in the past.

We can also grow together by sharing our knowledge. The first step in this endeavor has been taken. TEDxCuracao will organize their event the 12th of March with the theme Bridging the Gap.

TEDxAruba was present



and gave a short presentation at the launching event of TEDxCuracao this past November. We wish TEDxCuracao all the luck and

fun in the world and we cannot wait to tune in the 12th of March to learn all about how to 'Bridge the Gap'! □



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8:00 PM



**Tuesday**  
Local Talent Show by JAJA  
8:00 PM



**Saturday**  
Violin Night by ANGELA  
8:00 PM



**Wednesday**  
Latin dance show by a local dance group  
8:00 PM



**Sunday**  
Local Talent Show by ANNIA  
8:00 PM



**Thursday**  
Acrobatic Show  
8:00 PM



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## Loyal Guests Thank Aichel Lynch And Ruben Garcia for their help!

**EAGLE BEACH** - La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino Timeshare owners, Tom & Pat, encountered profound kindness on the island of Aruba. On their last night here, they attended the Plaza Cafe Christmas show along with 300 other people, taking pictures and enjoying the moment. Upon leaving, Tom unknowingly left his cell phone where he was sitting, and went back with Pat to the hotel.

He realized the phone was missing when he reached his room, and jumped back into his car, to return to the Plaza Cafe immediately.

There the security personnel did not have any information and asked Tom to come back the following day, but Tom was leaving the island and considered the phone lost.

The next morning, after breakfast and before going to the airport, he decided to stop back at the

front desk to see Aichel Lynch, and explain the challenge to her. She went into action immediately by calling the phone, and amazingly it was answered by the Christmas Show's EMCEE Ruben Garcia who was happy to return the phone to the hotel a few minutes later. The story only comes to show, says Tom, how great the people of Aruba are, when strangers found and turned the phone over, to Ruben Garcia, who went out of his way to return it, and most of all, La Cabana Beach Resort & Casino executive Aichel Lynch, who took the initiative to find it.

Tom made it on time to the plane with his phone!!

It is very clear why Aruba is named ONE HAPPY ISLAND, he says, it's all about its people!!

With grateful hearts, Tom and Pat, La Cabana Owners, Week 46. □



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## Santa Came to Aruba in the Form of Richard Dale Sanders!

**PALM BEACH** - He looks like Santa Claus, his smile is pure Santa and his elves are called Kaelan and Katherine: Richard Dale Sanders (65) from Virginia Beach, VA. Bringing the Christmas spirit with him, Richard and his family are on the island for the Christmas Holidays, enjoying their 15th visit to the island. And of course they went to Fishes & More Restaurant in the Arawak Garden, a place they often go to for its excellent service and great food.

The favorite dishes of the Sanders family are Fish Soup, Mussels and Chicken Parmesan, followed by a steaming hot espresso.

We hope the Sanders family will have a wonderful Holiday Season on this Happy Island and come back soon, please! □



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## If You Are a Thrill Seeker, Jump Into the Deep Blue Sea From a Cliff!

**PALM BEACH** - The small, family business of ABC Tours continues to prove that it is truly the 'little tour company that could'. Created 20 years ago by the husband and wife team of Marvin and Sharla Kelly, it excels through commitment to the simple ideal of stellar customer care, while sharing Aruba's most spectacular attractions. Today's excursions are exclusive, using top-of-the-line transportation, while offering the same warm, personal charm with the promise of an adventure beyond comparison.

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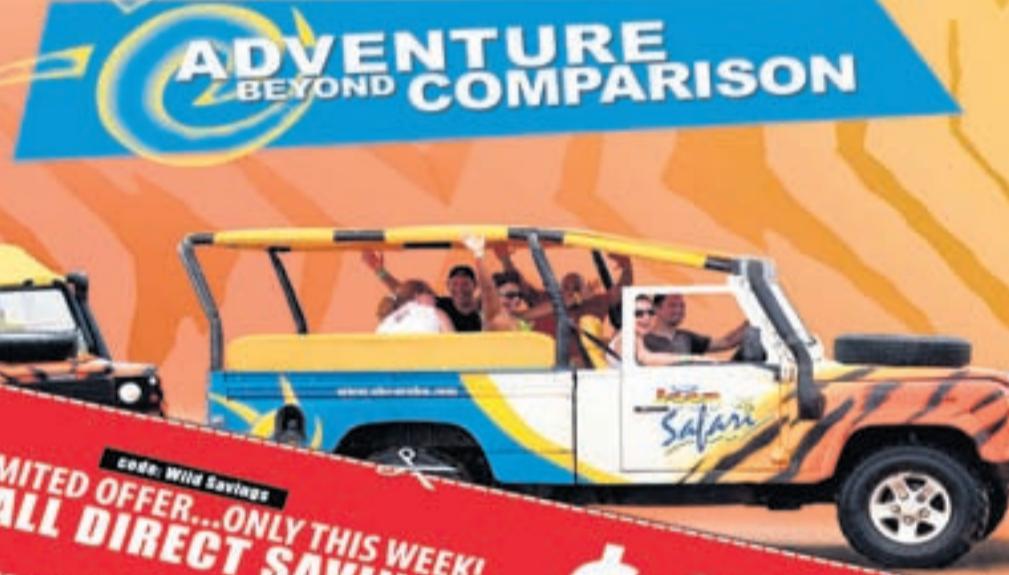
plains Sharla. "Nowadays, we are still very much involved, managing the company and making sure the feeling of being part of the family is intrinsic to each tour.

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both excitement and fun. The choice of stops is also unique, with ABC Tours taking guests past the island's most breathtaking sceneries, and on to discover the hidden beauty of secluded beaches and dramatic rock formations as well as to well-known sites such as Baby Beach and the Natural Pool.

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Natural Pool, only available on selected tours at ABC.

The unique ABC Tours experience extends to the menu, with a home-cooked recipe for lunch or dinner as a part of each tour. Traditional meals are provided by Waka Waka restaurant, which uses secret, family recipes, passed down through four generations and provided by Sharla's own grandmother. The restaurant provides a true taste of Aruba, whether enjoying a meal after an unforgettable tour or simply stopping by, at any time, to try out any one of "Machi (Grandma) Betty's" delicious offerings, from delectable appetizers to scrumptious desserts. □

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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY



### Stephen Curry Scores AP Male Athlete of the Year

Fans cheer as Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) reacts after scoring in Oakland, Calif. Curry has been named The Associated Press 2015 Male Athlete of the Year. (AP Photo/Ben Margot)

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## Panthers' bid for perfect season ends with loss to Falcons

**CHARLES ODUM**  
Associated Press

**Atlanta (AP)** - Carolina's bid for an undefeated season ended Sunday when Julio Jones' dramatic 70-yard touchdown reception powered the Atlanta Falcons to a 20-13 victory over Cam Newton and the Panthers.

Carolina (14-1) got the ball with 90 seconds left and no timeouts remaining. Newton completed a 19-yard

pass to Corey Brown on first down but fumbled when stripped by Vic Beasley Jr. on the following play. Adrian Clayborn recovered for the Falcons, wrapping up the win. Matt Ryan threw for 306 yards and one touchdown for the Falcons (8-7), and Devonta Freeman ran for 73 yards with a touchdown. Newton threw for 142 yards and ran for 46 yards, including an 8-yard

scoring run to cap the Panthers' opening drive. Carolina needed a win, or a loss or tie by Arizona against Green Bay, to clinch home-field advantage for the NFC playoffs. Jones got the best of his matchup with Carolina cornerback Josh Norman. Jones had nine catches for 178 yards. The touchdown catch in the third quarter compares with the best of Jones' career highlights.

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Atlanta Falcons wide receiver Julio Jones (11) makes a catch against Carolina Panthers middle linebacker Luke Kuechly (59) during the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Dec. 27, 2015, in Atlanta. Jones scored a touchdown on the play. The Falcons beat the Panthers 20-13, ending the Panthers' bid for a perfect season.

(AP Photo/John Bazemore)

Jones reached above linebacker Luke Kuechly for the catch as Panthers safety Kurt Coleman slipped, leaving a clear path for Jones to the end zone. The play put Atlanta ahead to stay at 14-10. Atlanta's Shayne Graham kicked field goals of 37 and 54 yards in the final 2:30. The last field goal pushed Atlanta's lead to seven points with 1:30 remaining. Carolina trailed 14-10 in the fourth quarter when Ryan mishandled a shotgun snap from the Panthers 37. Ryan couldn't pick up the loose ball. Norman made the recovery and returned it 12 yards. Graham Gano's 47-yard field goal cut Atlanta's lead to 14-13. There was an expectation officials would call the game closely following complaints that play was allowed to get out of hand in the Panthers' game against the Giants last week. Postgame fallout included a one-game suspension for New York wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. and Norman being fined \$26,044 for his role in several incidents. □



## College Roundup:

# Nebraska beats UCLA in lopsided Foster Farms Bowl



**Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr., left, celebrates at midfield with teammate Alonzo Moore after the team's 37-29 win over UCLA during the Foster Farms Bowl NCAA college football game Saturday, Dec. 26, 2015, in Santa Clara, Calif.**

(AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

### SANTA CLARA, California

**(AP)** — Nebraska quarterback Tommy Armstrong Jr. threw a touchdown pass and ran for another score to help the Cornhuskers cap a losing season by beating UCLA 37-29 in the Foster Farms Bowl on Saturday.

Among the other bowl games, Virginia Tech beat Tulsa 55-52 in a pulsating Independence Bowl, and Duke beat Indiana in overtime to take out the Pinstripe Bowl at Yankee Stadium.

Nebraska found itself in a bowl game despite going in with a 5-7 record; there were not enough teams with at least 6-6 records to fill all 80 slots. That record looked like becoming 5-8 when the Bruins took an early 21-7 lead.

But the Cornhuskers scored 30 straight points. Stanley Morgan Jr. gave them the lead for good with a one-handed, 22-yard catch in the third quarter and Imani Cross, Terrell Newby and Andy Janovich all ran for scores.

Armstrong completed 12 of 19 passes for 174 yards but Nebraska did most of its work on the ground, with a season-high 326 yards

rushing.

Josh Rosen threw for 319 yards and two touchdowns for UCLA.

Virginia Tech sent coach Frank Beamer into retirement on a winning note after 29 years with the team by beating Tulsa 55-52 in the Independence Bowl.

Tulsa (6-7) rallied from a three-touchdown deficit in the second half to pull to 55-52 with 3:47 left. Virginia Tech's Dadi L'homme Nicolas ended Tulsa's final drive with a sack of Dane Evans on fourth down.

The 107 points were the most in Independence Bowl history. Ford's 227 yards receiving on 12 catches set an Independence Bowl record.

Michael Brewer threw for 344 yards and Isaiah Ford had 227 yards receiving.

Duke's Ross Martin kicked a 36-yard field goal in overtime to give the Blue Devils a 44-41 win against Indiana in the Pinstripe Bowl and their first bowl win in 54 years.

After Martin made his kick on the first possession of the extra period, the Hoosiers kicker Griffin Oakes missed a 38-yard attempt, handing the Blue Devils their first bowl victory since the 1961

Cotton Bowl.

Oakes' try sailed over the right upright and was ruled wide. Oakes protested that it was good, but the kick could not be reviewed.

Washington State's Luke Falk threw two touchdown passes to lead the Cougars past Miami 20-14 in an ironically snowy Sun Bowl.

Erik Powell added field goals of 30 and 25 yards to help the Cougars (9-4) win

a bowl games for the first time in 12 years.

Miami (8-5) lost its sixth consecutive bowl game.

Washington's Myles Gaskin broke a third-quarter tie with an 86-yard run and had a season-high 181 yards and four touchdowns to help the Huskies defeat Southern Mississippi 41-31 in the Heart of Dallas Bowl.

Gaskin's other scores

came on 2- and 1-yard runs in the first quarter and a 13-yarder in the fourth.

On the 86-yarder, he took a handoff inside, broke to the left sideline and shook off one final defender at the Southern Miss 35.

Marshall's Chase Litton completed 23 for 34 passes for 218 yards and a touchdown in the 16-10 victory over Connecticut in the St. Petersburg Bowl. □

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**NHL Roundup:****Blues beat Stars in shootout to trim Central lead**

**ST. LOUIS (AP)** — St. Louis' David Backes scored in the ninth round of a long shootout to give the Blues a 3-2 win against Dallas on Saturday, trimming the gap between the top teams in the NHL Central Division.

The Blues moved within seven points of the Stars in the first game of an important double; they meet again on Sunday.

Washington extended its lead in the Metropolitan Division by beating struggling Montreal, which lost

the outright lead in the Atlantic and is now level on points with Detroit, which won at Nashville, while Los Angeles maintained its healthy lead in the Pacific by downing Arizona.

St. Louis' Alexander Steen and Robby Fabbri scored in regulation and Jake Allen made 22 saves for the Blues.

Tyler Seguin and Colton Sceviour scored in regulation for the Stars, who had won their previous three games.

Washington goaltender

Braden Holtby stopped 29 shots to help the Capitals beat Montreal 3-1.

Holtby allowed only a second-period goal to Daniel Carr in earning his NHL-leading 22nd victory. He's unbeaten in regulation time in his 10 career games against Montreal. Jason Chimera had a goal and an assist while Evgeny Kuznetsov and Jay Beagle also netted for the Capitals, who have won eight straight home games to reach a franchise record start of 26-6-2.



Dallas Stars' Colton Sceviour attempts to deflect the puck past St. Louis Blues goalie Jake Allen during the third period of an NHL hockey game Saturday, Dec. 26, 2015, in St. Louis. The Blues won 3-2 in a shootout.

(AP Photo/Billy Hurst)

Montreal has been out-scored 22-6 while losing its last six games and has dropped 10 of 11 since Dec. 1.

Detroit snared a share of top spot in the Atlantic by winning 3-2 at Nashville. Brendan Smith had a goal and an assist while Riley Sheahan and Luke Glendening also scored for the Red Wings.

Filip Forsberg scored both goals for the Predators.

Los Angeles' Anze Kopitar scored 36 seconds into overtime to secure a 4-3 win against Arizona.

Kopitar saved the Kings on a night when they rallied from a one-goal deficit only to squander a two-goal lead. Drew Doughty, Tanner Pearson and Dustin Brown also scored for Los Angeles.

Oliver Ekman-Larsson scored twice and Antoine Vermette added a goal for the Coyotes.

Pittsburgh's Sidney Crosby had a goal and an assist in

his return from a one-game injury absence as the Penguins defeated Minnesota 3-1.

Eric Fehr and Patric Hornqvist also scored for the Penguins, who won consecutive games for the first time in six weeks.

Minnesota has lost six of its last seven against Pittsburgh. Jason Zucker netted for the Wild, who have lost six of their past seven meetings with the Penguins.

Buffalo rallied from a two-goal deficit in the third period and overran Boston 6-3, with former Bruin Jack Eichel scoring twice for the Sabres.

Carolina's Justin Faulk scored the go-ahead goal 8:17 into the third period to lift the Hurricanes over New Jersey 3-1.

Tampa Bay's Steven Stamkos had two power-play goals and an assist during the second period to power the Lightning to a 5-2 win against Columbus. □

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## Peyton Manning angrily denies he used HGH in 2011

**ARNIE STAPLETON**

AP Pro Football Writer

**ENGLEWOOD, Colorado**

(AP) — Peyton Manning said a report by Al Jazeera set to air Sunday that suggests he used performance-enhancing drugs was "completely fabricated, complete trash, garbage."

Manning angrily denied allegations to ESPN on Sunday morning he used HGH in 2011 when he missed an entire season while recovering from neck fusion surgery.

He denied ever using PEDs and blasted the report for suggesting he got drugs that were shipped to his wife, Ashley.

"I can't speak for any other athlete. I know what I've done, I know how hard I've worked in my 18 years of playing in the NFL. There are no shortcuts in the NFL. I've done it the long way, I've done it the hard way. And to insinuate anything otherwise is a complete and total joke, it's defamation and it really ticks me off," Manning told ESPN.

The Broncos and Colts also issued statements Sunday morning in support of Manning. "Knowing Peyton Manning and everything he stands for, the Denver Broncos support him 100 percent," the team said. "These are false claims made to Al Jazeera, and we don't believe the report." The statement added that "Peyton is rightfully outraged by the allegations, which he emphatically denied to our organization and which have been publicly renounced by the source who initially provided them." The Colts, whom Manning played for from 1998-2011, issued a statement calling the report "utterly ridiculous." □

## NBA Roundup: Spurs extend home dominance and beat Nuggets



San Antonio Spurs forward LaMarcus Aldridge (12) drives around Denver Nuggets forward Kenneth Faried during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Saturday, Dec. 26, 2015, in San Antonio. San Antonio won 101-86.

(AP Photo/Darren Abate)

### The Associated Press

**SAN ANTONIO (AP) —**

San Antonio immediately bounced back from a rare loss and beat Denver 101-86 on Saturday to extend its franchise record for consecutive home wins to 26. Kawhi Leonard had 20 points for the Spurs, who maintained their eight-game lead atop the NBA's Southwest Division.

The day's other key contests were in the Eastern Conference: Miami beat state and division rival Orlando to move 1-1/2 games above the Magic and stay within half a game of leader Atlanta, which comfortably beat New York; while Boston used a strong team effort to earn a victory over Detroit.

San Antonio's LaMarcus Aldridge had 12 points and nine rebounds, and Boris Diaw had 16 points for the

Spurs, who have won all 17 home games this season to add to the final nine of the previous campaign.

Denver's Nikola Jokic scored 22 points on 10-for-19 shooting.

Miami rallied in the fourth quarter to win 108-101 at Orlando, with Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh each scoring 24 points.

Orlando led 76-69 after three, but Wade fueled Miami's rally with 12 points in the fourth. The Heat outscored the Magic 39-25 in the final period.

Nik Vucevic led Orlando with 22 points and 10 rebounds.

Atlanta overcame a slow start to win its sixth straight game, beating New York 117-98.

Paul Millsap scored 22 points and Al Horford added 19 for the Hawks, who trailed by 15 points midway through the first

quarter and were down by 14 late in the third before completely taking over the game, going up by 20 points early in the fourth.

Carmelo Anthony, returning after missing one game with a sprained right ankle, finished with 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Knicks, who have dropped three straight.

Boston had six players score in double figures and the Celtics won 99-93 at Detroit.

Avery Bradley scored 18 points and Isaiah Thomas had 17 points and nine assists for the Celtics, who hung on in a tight finish.

The Pistons were within two points when former Detroit player Jonas Jerebko hit a baseline jumper with 10.7 seconds left to seal the result.

Pistons center Andre Drummond had 22 points and 22 rebounds for his fifth 20-

20 game of the season. Dallas' J.J. Barea made a career-high seven 3-pointers and finished with 26 points, powering the Mavericks to a 118-111 win against Chicago.

Barea went 7-of-8 from beyond the arc and continued the form that saw score a career-high 30 in the previous game, while Zaza Pachulia contributed 17 points and 12 rebounds for the Mavericks.

Derrick Rose led the Bulls with 25 points, including nine in the fourth quarter, but had a key turnover before getting called for a 5-second violation when Chicago had a chance to tie in the final 11 seconds.

Charlotte's Kemba Walker scored 11 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter to steer the Hornets to a 98-92 win against Memphis.

Nicolas Batum had 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Hornets, who trailed 81-76 early in the final period. Mike Conley scored 19 points for Memphis.

Portland's Allen Crabbe scored a career-high 26 points and the Trail Blazers shut down LeBron James to rout Cleveland 105-76.

Crabbe scored 21 in the first half, helping Portland arrest a five-game losing streak. He was 4 for 6 from 3-point range for the night. C.J. McCollum had 16 points for the Trail Blazers.

James missed his first four shots, had six points at half-time and didn't play in the fourth quarter. His 12 points total matched his season low.

Toronto used some hot perimeter shooting to win 111-90 at Milwaukee, rattling off eight 3-pointers to take the lead late in the third quarter and then finishing the match with seven straight 3s. □

# Stephen Curry Shoots Way to AP Male Athlete of Year

**JOSH DUBOW**

**AP Sports Writer**

**OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) —**

Stephen Curry's greatness as a basketball player can be measured by his record-setting shooting numbers that are changing the game.

His immense popularity derives from something less tangible.

While many NBA greats rely on uncommon height and athletic ability that av-

erage fans can only dream of having, Curry's game relies on the traits that every casual player can work on: shoot, dribble and pass. The difference is, perhaps nobody ever has put those three skills together the same way Curry has the past year as he has dominated on the court and made the once downtrodden Golden State Warriors the NBA's must-watch team.

"The way that I play has a lot of skill but is stuff that if you go to the YMCA or rec leagues or church leagues around the country, everybody wants to shoot, everybody wants to handle the ball, make creative passes and stuff like that," he said. "You can work on that stuff. Not everybody has the vertical, or the physical gifts to be able to go out and do a windmill dunk and stuff like that. I can't even do it."

That's about all Curry is unable to do on the basketball court. His amazing year, in which he won an MVP, led Golden State to its first title in 40 years and helped the Warriors get off to a record-setting start this season, earned him The Associated Press 2015 Male Athlete of the Year.

Curry finished first in a vote by U.S. editors and news directors, with the results released Saturday. He joined LeBron James, Michael Jordan and Larry Bird as the only basketball players to win the honor in the 85 years of the award. Curry beat out golfer Jordan Spieth, who won two majors, and American Pharoah, who became the first horse since 1978 to win the Triple Crown.

While American Pharoah got three more first-place votes than Curry's 24, Curry appeared on 86 percent of the 82 ballots that ranked the top five candidates. More than one-third of the voters left American Pharoah off their list.

"That's a real honor," Curry said. "I'm appreciative of that acknowledgement because it's across all different sports. ... It's pretty cool."

Curry has become the face of the NBA this past year. His jersey is the best-seller in the league, his team's games get record television ratings at home and in opposing markets and even his 3-year-old daughter Riley became a star by overshadowing her dad at playoff news conferences.

Even his intricate warmup routine has become a show for fans who get out



**Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) drives to the basket in front of New Orleans Pelicans forward Ryan Anderson in the first half of an NBA basketball game in New Orleans. Curry has been named The Associated Press 2015 Male Athlete of the Year.**

**(AP Photo/Gerald Herbert)**

early or even sometimes on TV pregame shows. He does an elaborate two-ball dribbling routine, works on passes and shots with both hands, takes jump shots from just inside half court and then caps it with a long-range shot from the tunnel on the way back to the locker room.

"Steph actually looks different," ESPN analyst Jalen Rose said. "Like the best player in the league usually is also physically opposing — 6-6 plus, scowl on his face, menacing. With the attitude that we appreciated because like a Michael Jordan or Shaquille O'Neal, or Kobe Bryant, you know, just a cutthroat nature. Steph allows us into his living room. We see him on a national stage be a son, a dad, a husband, a father, a brother. And he does all of it while continuing to improve."

The drive to succeed is fueled by the fact that Curry got no major scholarship offers coming out of high school, he was the third point guard taken in the 2009 draft and he settled for a below-market contract extension three years ago because people questioned his durability following ankle injuries. □

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**THE BIG SHORT**  
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**CONCUSSION**  
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**ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS: ROAD CHIP**  
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**SISTERS**  
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**CHRIS HEMSWORTH | CILLIAN MURPHY**

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## Tech Toys: Kiddie tablets 'grow up' as competition grows

BREE FOWLER

AP Technology Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Kiddie tablets have grown up. Tablets designed just for kids are getting more sophisticated as they face increased competition from regular tablets. The new products also have better screens, speedier chips and fashionably slim bodies. They let older children do more, yet hold their hands until they're ready for unsupervised access. Although many of the tablets were originally conceived as educational toys for kids as old as middle schoolers, they've been more popular with younger children. Older kids have been apt to reject them in favor of their parents' tablet or smartphone.

That shift has prompted companies to focus more on preschoolers and kindergarteners, as they create super-durable products that can withstand repeated abuse and develop games and apps that teach reading and math. But now, some of those companies are looking to take back some of the sales to older kids that they've lost over the years, offering premium products — most with price tags of over \$100 — that look and perform less like toys and more like the ones adults use.

LeapFrog, maker of the toy-like LeapPad, released its first Android tablet this year. And Kurio is branching out to Windows 10 and includes a full version of Microsoft Office in a new tablet-laptop combination.

The use of Android and Windows software, in place of the more basic, custom-made systems used in toy tablets, allows for more sophisticated apps and games and a range of content from standard app stores.

Monica Brown, LeapFrog's vice president for product marketing, said the com-

pany aimed to "create something that was kind of sleek and more tech forward for kids who were looking for something that felt like their parents' tablet."

But parents still want educational content and safety features that come with a tablet designed purely for kids. LeapFrog's Epic, along with the other new tablets for kids, are attempts to bridge that gap. The Epic looks like a regular Android tablet, but comes with a removable bright-green bumper. It is much faster than a LeapPad and can run versions of popular Android games such as "Fruit Ninja" and "Doodle Jump." There's access to the Internet, but it's limited to about 10,000 kid-safe websites (though parents can add others). Parents can also limit and track how much time a child spends watching videos, playing games or reading. Lynn Schofield Clark, a professor of media studies at the University of Denver, said kids tablets are a tough sell these days.

"Kids are always aspirational in their ages, and they're always interested in what older kids are doing," Clark said, pointing to the fascination that many preteens have with smartphones as a prime example.

Meanwhile, most parents won't spend money on kids-only gadgets unless they believe they offer significant educational benefits.

"If they're just looking for something to entertain their kid, then why wouldn't they just hand over their smartphone?" she asked. Kurio aims to answer that question with the Smart, a device that lets kids do things they previously might have needed their parents' laptop for, such as typing up and saving their homework online or playing video on their TV through an



This photo shows the Kurio Smart. Geared toward older kids, this is something that they can type book reports on or do online research for a school project. It's the first kids tablet to run on Windows 10 and its purchase includes a free year of Microsoft Office, along with some OneDrive storage.

(KD Interactive via AP)



This photo shows an InnoTab MAX. VTech is the kid's technology maker that was hacked, exposing the personal information of over 6 million children. That said, this is a pretty decent product, particularly for younger children.

(VTECH via AP)

HDMI cable. The Smart is a Windows 10 laptop with a detachable screen and comes with a free year of Microsoft Office.

Eric Levin, Kurio's strategic director, said kids using children's tablets are getting younger, as older kids gravitate toward adult products. Four years ago, he said, most Kurio users ranged from ages 6 to 12. Now, half of them are 3 to 5. Although older kids may be ready for adult tablets,

the shift has left those 8 to 12 without age-appropriate devices, Levin says. The Smart tries to fix that.

Other makers of kids tablets have also gone high-end this year. Fuhu bills the Nabi Elev-8 as a premium, 8-inch tablet. But the company ran into financial problems early in the holiday season, and its products have been tough to find.

Nonetheless, adult tablets remain popular with kids. Amazon touts its Fire tab-

let as something the entire family can use, eliminating the need to buy something just for the kids.

"While I appreciate that might have led other companies to adjust their products, we're upping our game based on what customers want in the best kid experience," said Aaron Bromberg, senior manager of product management for Amazon Devices.

The tablet's FreeTime app lets parents set up profiles for each kid, with access to only the content they approve. It also lets parents limit the amount of time spent on different kinds of content such as videos or apps. For an additional fee, Amazon's FreeTime Unlimited service offers more than 10,000 books, apps, games and videos geared toward kids ages 3 to 10.

Nonetheless, Amazon is selling a kids' edition tablet for \$100. It's essentially Amazon's bare-bones \$50 Fire tablet packaged with a colorful protective bumper and a year's subscription to FreeTime Unlimited. It also comes with a two-year guarantee: If your kid breaks it, Amazon will replace it. □

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## Wall Street Wrap: Expect less and buy antacid: 2016 investment forecasts

STAN CHOE

AP Business Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Investing is becoming more of a grind. Expect it to stay that way. Analysts, mutual-fund managers and other forecasters are telling investors to expect lower returns from stocks and bonds in 2016 than in past years. They're also predicting more se-

expectations is long. Economic growth around the world remains frustratingly weak, and earnings growth for big U.S. companies has stalled. Stock prices aren't cheap when measured against corporate earnings, unlike the early years of this bull market. The Federal Reserve also just lifted short-term interest rates for the first time in nearly a

acteristic of past market peaks, such as the dot-com bubble, may not be a problem.

"We think investors will be rewarded over the next five to 10 years with decent inflation-adjusted returns," said Joe Davis, global head of the investment strategy group at mutual-fund giant Vanguard. "That said, they will likely pale in com-

price and longer-term earnings trends popularized by economist Robert Shiller, a Nobel prize winner, is also more expensive than its historical average.

These already high stock prices leave little room for them to rise further without some impetus from the economy or better profits.

Investors should also brace for dips. The market's big drop in August was so rattling because it hadn't happened since October 2011, an abnormally long time. Since World War II, investors have been hit with drops of at least 10 percent every 19 months, on average.

Goldman Sachs strategists are forecasting the S&P 500 will end 2016 at 2,100, which would be a 4 percent rise from Monday's close of 2,021. Barclays expects the index to rise 9 percent, and Deutsche Bank expects it to rise 11 percent.

All would be a step down from past results. The S&P 500 gained 15 percent annually on average from 2009 through 2014, not including dividends.

### FOREIGN STOCKS

Investors have a strong yen for foreign stocks. They poured a net \$208 billion into international stock funds in the last year, while pulling \$56 billion from U.S. stock funds.

One reason for the migration is that investors want to make their portfolios look more like the broad market. Foreign stocks make up about half the world's market value but are often just a sliver of 401(k) portfolios. Also, central banks in Europe, Japan and elsewhere are pumping stimulus into their economies to drive growth, when the Federal Reserve is moving in the opposite direction.

And earnings growth in Europe and other regions looks to be accelerating more strongly. Dale Winner, portfolio manager at the Wells Fargo Advantage International Equity fund, expects profits for European companies to grow in the neighborhood of 15 percent. For U.S. companies, meanwhile, he's expecting close to zero growth. □



Trader Andrew Silverman, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. Analysts, mutual-fund managers and other forecasters are telling investors to expect lower returns from stocks and bonds in 2016 than in past years.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

vere swings in prices. Remember that 10 percent drop for stocks that freaked investors out in August? It likely won't take another four years for the next one. The good news is that few economists are predicting a recession in 2016. That means stocks and other investments can avoid a sustained slide and keep grinding higher, analysts say. Next year is expected to look more like this year, with gyrating stock prices on track to end close to where they started, than the bull market's euphoric earlier years like 2013 and its 32 percent surge in the Standard & Poor's 500 index. "You have to be realistic and think the outsized runs we've had — in 2013, for instance — are pretty unlikely," said Mike Barclay, portfolio manager at the Columbia Dividend Income mutual fund. "Trees don't grow to the sky."

The list of reasons for muted

decade. Besides making all kinds of markets more volatile, higher rates could also hurt prices of bonds in investors' and mutual funds' portfolios. The investment-bank Barclays gave this succinct title on its 100-page outlook report for 2016: "Curb your expectations."

While it's worth knowing the general sentiment on Wall Street, it's also worth remembering financial forecasters have a spotty record for accuracy. Analysts cite a long list of risks that could upset their forecasts. Investments could tank if an unexpected spike in inflation rips through the global economy, for example, or if the slowdown in the world's second-largest economy, China, ends up even more severe than feared.

But there is some comfort in the subdued forecasts — they are a sign that the greed and mania char-

parison to the strong returns we've had over the last five."

Here's a look at how analysts see investments shaping up in 2016:

### US STOCKS

Corporate profit growth hit a wall this year, as plunging prices of oil and metals slammed energy and raw-material producers, the stronger dollar hurt exporters, and economic growth remained tepid. Analysts expect profits to stabilize next year, but companies across many industries are groping for revenue growth amid the still-slow global economy.

Stocks in the S&P 500 are no longer cheap relative to their earnings, the most common gauge of stock prices. The index is trading at 17.2 times its earnings over the last 12 months, higher than its average of 14.5 over the last decade. A measure that looks at

## Japan inflation edges up in Nov, but spending, wages fall

**TOKYO (AP)** — Japan's inflation rate rose slightly in November, though lower household spending and incomes slowed progress toward a sustained recovery for the world's third-largest economy. The consumer price index was up 0.3 percent from a year earlier, though down 0.3

percent from October, the government reported this weekend. The government has made scant progress toward its goal of a 2 percent inflation rate it has said is needed to ensure a "virtuous cycle" of rising demand and rising production, partly due to the sharp drop in global crude

oil prices. Figures released Friday showed that core inflation excluding food prices was 0.1 percent, while household spending in November fell 2.9 percent from a year earlier. Excluding food and energy, the consumer price index rose 0.9 percent. Incomes fell 1.4 percent from the

year before, suggesting companies are not heeding appeals by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other leaders to raise wages and increase investment inside Japan. Japanese companies have tended instead to invest their surging profits, thanks to massive monetary stimulus, in faster

growing markets overseas. Friday's data also showed that Japan's jobless rate edged higher in November, to 3.3 percent from 3.1 percent in October. But companies have tended to add overtime or hire temporary help instead of raising wages to attract new staff. □

## Chocolate maker: We were honest about remelted chocolate

**CANDICE CHOI**

**AP Food Industry**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A scandal is roiling the world of fancy chocolate: Did two brothers misleadingly sell remelted chocolate and sprout beards to cultivate a hipster appeal?

The headlines began after a site called DallasFood.org published a series about Rick and Michael Mast, who have been toasted in food circles for their stylishly wrapped chocolate bars that can cost \$10 a piece. The problem is that the brothers described their company as "bean-to-bar," or chocolate made from scratch.

In the "Mast Brothers: What Lies Beneath the Beards," DallasFood.org outlined how the pair initially used melted industrial chocolate, referred to as couverture. The series concluded by calling the brothers the "Milli Vanilli of chocolate," a reference the pop duo who lip synced their way to fame.

In response, the Mast Brothers acknowledged using couverture in the past, but said they were open about the practice at the time. They say they haven't used



Brothers Rick and Michael Mast pose for a photo at their chocolate factory in the Brooklyn borough of New York. DallasFood.org published a series about Rick and Michael Mast, whose stylishly wrapped chocolate bars can cost \$10 each.

(AP Photo/Candice Choi)

remelted chocolate since 2009.

The brothers say they always considered themselves "bean-to-bar" because they were making at least some chocolate that way from the start.

Fueling the controversy are photographs showing the transformation of the brothers' appearance. The before shots show them clean shaven. In the after photos, they're bearded with Amish overtones.

Here's what Rick Mast had

to say at the brothers' Brooklyn factory:

Q: What is extent to which you used remelted chocolate, and when did that stop?

A: First and foremost, we're 100 percent a bean-to-bar chocolate company. That's important because the public has been dis-served by the media and sensationalist headlines to promote this idea that we're not that.

Q: But you've said in response to the stories that

you did use remelted chocolate in the past.

A: Right, absolutely. In the first year or so, we would purchase couverture for all sorts of experiments, which is something we have always been honest and open about. That's gotten so out of proportion, that we were hiding it.

We told chefs, we told competitors, we told colleagues, we told the press that we were using couverture for all sorts of different stuff we were working on.

Q: Did that include using remelted chocolate in the bars you were selling?

A: We have never, ever remelted chocolate and sold it as bean-to-bar chocolate.

Q: Were bars that were made bean-to-bar labeled as "bean-to-bar"?

A: If people would ask, 'Did you make these bars bean-to-bar?' We would say yes.

Q: But if it's not labeled which ones are bean-to-bar, how would people know which is which, unless you told them?

A: We weren't even labeling bean-to-bar as "bean-to-bar." I understand if we put a chocolate bar out

there that said "bean-to-bar," and it wasn't — that is 100 percent misleading. But if you're not doing that and you are telling people that this is not bean-to-bar, I don't know what else to do.

Q: Another part of what fueled the story is the transformation of your image.

A: Before I had a beard, I didn't have a beard. I know, it's a big scandal. I like to dress like I dress. We grew beards because my brother and I made a bet that once we sold X amount of bars, we wouldn't shave. And we stuck with it.

Q: Have you thought of changing your look as a result of all this?

A: No. I think people might underestimate my ability to focus on just what we need to do, which is make great chocolate and grow a beautiful business.

Q: Looking back, is there anything you would do differently in the early days?

A: No. You're talking about a nearly decade ago. You're talking about something I was open about then, and I'm telling you now. We never lied about using couverture. □

## Mitsubishi pushes back delivery of Japan-made regional jet

**E. KURTENBACH**  
**AP Business Writer**

**TOKYO (AP)** — Mitsubishi, a maker of the World War II-era Zero fighter, said late last week it plans to postpone by one year its deliveries of its new regional jet, to mid-2018.

The jet recently made a successful maiden flight that "confirmed the basic characteristics to be sat-

isfactory," the company said in a statement. But it said several issues need to be addressed so the jet's development schedule was revised.

The company did not provide details about those issues. Industrial conglomerate Mitsubishi aims to reclaim Japan's one-time status as an aviation power some 70 years after the

country suspended making planes following its defeat in World War II.

While it holds advanced knowhow in avionics, materials and other key aircraft-related know-how and products, Japan has yet to integrate them into its own 21st century passenger aircraft with modern electronics and leading-edge technology.

The project by Mitsubishi Aircraft Corp. and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries is the successor to an unsuccessful attempt in the 1960s by Japan to break into the international market with the 64-seat turboprop YS-11. The aim this time is to secure a foothold in the lucrative but highly competitive commercial passenger jet market.

Mitsubishi says it hopes to win 20 percent of the global market for single-aisle, regional passenger jets. It had been scheduled to make its first delivery to leading customer All Nippon Airways in the spring of 2017. Earlier, the project suffered delays in deliveries of aircraft parts, about 70 percent of which are sourced from overseas. □

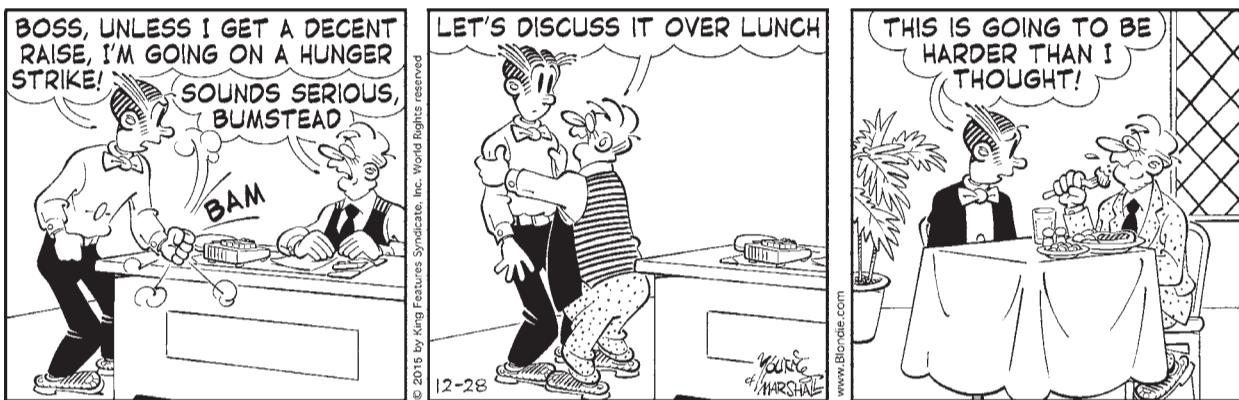
Mutts



6 Chix



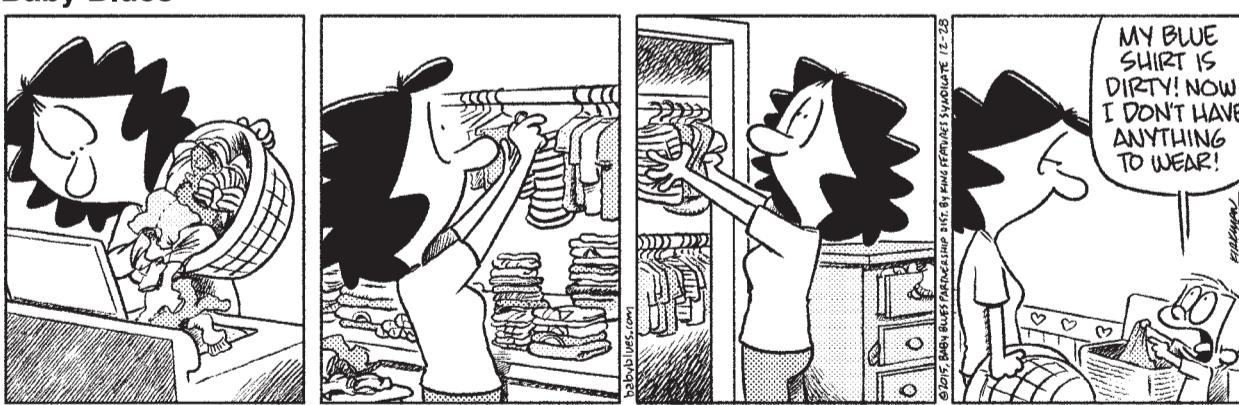
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Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

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9		7				1		
	2	4	1			5		

Difficulty Level ★

12/28

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

9	2	4	7	6	5	3	1	8
1	5	3	4	9	8	2	7	6
6	8	7	3	1	2	9	4	5
5	3	1	8	7	6	4	9	2
4	7	6	5	2	9	1	8	3
8	9	2	1	3	4	5	6	7
2	6	8	9	4	3	7	5	1
3	1	9	6	5	7	8	2	4
7	4	5	2	8	1	6	3	9

Saturday's puzzle answer

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16			
17						18					19		
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60			61	62					63				
64		65							66				
67		68							69				

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

12/28/15

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

I	L	L	S	P	A	N	S	F	O	R	E	
L	A	U	D	C	A	N	O	E	V	R	E	
K	I	T	E	H	I	T	O	R	R	E	A	
D	E	A	F	E	N	I	N	G	E	N	D	
D	A	M	S	E	S	S						
I	M	P	E	E	P	L	A	T	T	R	S	
L	I	O	N	S	L	O	N	Y	L	O	A	
I	L	L	S	T	A	R	O	T	D	A	U	
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E	Y	E	D	D	E	S	E	S	R	H	O	

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12/28/15

2 Haywire  
3 Conceited  
4 Chaperone  
5 Astronaut Alan  
6 Osmond sister  
7 Senses of self-esteem  
8 Soothing drink  
9 Think highly of  
10 Funicello and her namesakes  
11 Judd or Campbell  
12 Sofa  
13 Street talk  
21 Move over a bit  
23 Jack or joker  
25 Skirt fold  
26 Mrs. Truman  
27 Corn exporter  
28 Unexpected obstacle  
29 From the East  
32 Encourages  
34 Blyth & Cusack  
35 Part of the ear  
36 "the night before Christmas..."  
38 Hobbies  
40 Yellow fruit  
43 Fired a gun  
45 Most unhappy  
48 Votes into office  
50 Member of the naval forces  
51 Liberace's instrument  
52 Calcutta, \_\_  
53 Meager  
54 Curved sword  
56 May honoree  
57 Depressed  
58 Part of the eye  
59 Finishes  
62 Traitor

## IS leader says 'caliphate' well, mocks the Saudi-led alliance

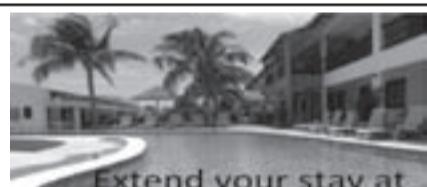
ZEINA KARAM

Associated Press

**BEIRUT (AP)** — The Islamic State group released a new message this weekend purportedly from its reclusive leader, claiming that his self-styled "caliphate" is doing well despite an unprecedented alliance against it and criticizing the recently announced Saudi-led Islamic military coalition against terrorism. In the 24-minute audio, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi said airstrikes by the international coalition only increase his group's determination and resolve. The message was al-Baghdadi's first since May, and comes amid battlefield setbacks that IS has recently faced.

Meanwhile, a U.S.-backed coalition of rebels in Syria — including Syrian Kurdish, Arab and Christian groups — captured a major dam on the Euphrates River from the Islamic State group as part of the coalition's march on IS-held areas in northern Syria. The coalition

known as Syria Democratic Forces, announced earlier this week a new offensive aimed at cutting supply lines between IS strongholds in the country's north. The SDF said it seized the Tishrin Dam, which supplies much of northern Syria with electricity, on Saturday. An SDF spokesman told AP earlier this week that his forces are also trying to cut the supply lines between the Islamic State's de-facto capital of Raqqa and the group's stronghold of Manbij in northern Syria. The SDF, dominated by the main Kurdish militia in Syria known as YPG, or People's Protection Units, has become a main force in fighting IS. The Islamic State group has come under pressure in Syria and Iraq, where it has declared its self-styled Islamic caliphate on territory that the militant group controls. It lost the town Sinjar in Iraq last month, and areas across the border in Syria at the same time. □



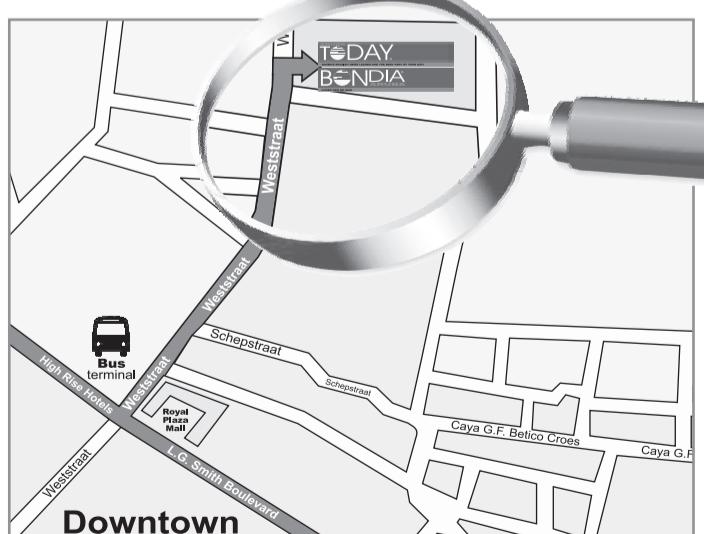
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## Researchers:

### Less Arctic sea ice means more precipitation

DAN JOLING

Associated Press

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP)

— The Arctic is seeing more precipitation as sea ice diminishes from climate warming, according to a research paper by U.S. and Canada scientists.

The study by three Dartmouth College researchers and one from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, concludes the effects from a changed hydrologic cycle is a potential major component of climate change that could create uncertainty in climate predictions. They also say it's too soon to tell whether more precipitation will slow warming or add to it.

Scientists have generally assumed that less sea ice would mean more evaporation and more precipitation, said Ben Kopec, a Dartmouth earth sciences doctoral student and lead author of the paper published Monday in the journal, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"Our goal with this work was to try to actually use observations of precipitation around the Arctic to get at this question of how much does sea ice influence precipitation, and if we lose sea ice, how much precipitation do you think will increase?" he said in a phone interview.

Arctic precipitation is composed of moisture from local and distance sources, he said.

"Most of the world gets its moisture from the warm waters in the subtropics," Kopec said. As moisture moves north from lower latitudes, including the North Pacific in Alaska's case, much of it falls before reaching the Arctic.

An increase in moisture from local sources, Kopec said, though small in comparison to evaporation in warmer oceans, could disproportionately affect Arc-



**Ice floes float in Baffin Bay above the arctic circle seen from the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker Louis S. St-Laurent. The Arctic is seeing more precipitation as sea ice diminishes from climate warming, according to a research paper by U.S. and Canada scientists.**

(AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Jonathan Hayward)

tic sites.

"In terms of the entire proportion that will reach a site in, say, Alaska, that local moisture becomes more important," he said.

The scientists studied precipitation data collected between 1990 and 2012 at three sites in the Canadian Arctic and three in the Greenland Sea, looking for changes in the source of precipitation as sea ice has diminished. Moisture from a warm source can be distinguished from a cold source through measurements of isotope compositions, Kopec said. As sea ice diminished over two decades, precipitation at the Arctic sites increased and the percentage from local sources grew. The researchers concluded that when sea ice decreases by 100,000 square kilometers, or 38,610 square miles, the percentage of local-sourced moisture increased by 18.2 percent in the Canadian Arctic and 10.8 percent in the Greenland Sea.

"We can say that with less sea ice, more of that moisture that fell was sourced from the Arctic," Kopec said.

Julienne Stroeve, senior research scientist at the National Snow and Ice Data

Center at the University of Colorado in Boulder, said previous studies have suggested a link between less September sea ice and an increase in snow in the Siberian Arctic.

"At least statistically there's a correlation between less sea ice and more precipitation in certain parts of the Arctic," she said.

Before the ocean can re-freeze, she said, it has to release heat it gained in summer. If it's shown that additional precipitation is from a local source, it would match other studies suggesting additional precipitation from waters formerly covered by ice at that time, Stroeve said.

Kopec said if precipitation falls as snow, it could increase the days that land reflects solar energy, providing a cooling effect.

If the additional precipitation falls as rain, it could cause earlier spring melt or later onset of autumn snow coverage, contributing to more warming.

"It's important for us in the future to nail down whether this is going to be more snow or more rain," Kopec said. "But we were able to say, 'This could have a large impact on the energy balance.' □

### Paris climate goals say emissions need to drop below zero to work

KARL RITTER

Associated Press

STOCKHOLM (AP) — If governments are serious about the global warming targets they adopted in Paris, scientists say they have two options: eliminating fossil fuels immediately or finding ways to undo their damage to the climate system in the future.

The first is politically impossible — the world is still hooked on using oil, coal and natural gas — which leaves the option of a major cleanup of the atmosphere later this century.

Yet the landmark Paris Agreement, adopted by 195 countries on Dec. 12, makes no reference to that, which has left some observers wondering whether politicians understand the implications of the goals they signed up for.

"I would say it's the single biggest issue that has to be resolved," said Glen Peters of the Cicero climate research institute in Oslo, Norway.

Scientists refer to this envisioned cleanup job as negative emissions — removing more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere than humans put in it.

Right now we're putting in a lot — about 50 billion tons a year, mostly carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels for energy.

There are methods to achieve negative emissions today but they would need to be scaled up to a level that experts say could put climate efforts in conflict with other priorities, such as eradicating hunger. Still, if the Paris climate goals are to be achieved, there's no way to avoid the issue, said Jan Minx of the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change in Berlin.

"My view is, let's have this discussion," he said. "Let's involve ourselves in developing these technologies. We need to keep learning."

The Paris Agreement was historic. For the first time all countries agreed to jointly fight climate change, primarily by reducing the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

Governments vowed to keep global warming "well below" 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) compared with preindustrial times. But even 2 degrees of warming could threaten the existence of low-lying island nations faced with rising seas. So governments agreed to try to limit warming to 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F), which is just half-a-degree above the global average temperature this year.

That goal is so ambitious — some would say far-fetched — that there's been very little research devoted to it. In Paris, politicians asked scientists to start studying how it can be done.

Minx and others said it's clear the goal cannot be reached without negative emissions in the future, because the atmosphere is filling up with greenhouse gases so fast that it may already be too late to keep the temperature rise below 1.5 degrees C.

"We are late with climate policy. We need to buy back some time," Minx said. □

# 'Force Awakens' becomes fastest movie to \$1 billion

SANDY COHEN

AP Entertainment Writer

**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" has reached \$1 billion at the box office, reaching the milestone with record-setting hyper speed.

The Walt Disney Co. said "The Force Awakens" crossed the billion-dollar mark Sunday, accomplishing the feat in just 12 days. The previous movie to reach \$1 billion the fastest was Universal's "Jurassic World," which did it in 13 days in June. "Jurassic World" also had the benefit of record grosses in China. "The Force Awakens" doesn't open in the world's second-largest movie market until Jan. 9.

J.J. Abrams' installment of "Star Wars" also posted the biggest Christmas Day box office in history with \$49.3 million and the best second-weekend earnings with \$153.5 million.

"The Force Awakens"



This photo shows a scene from the new film, "Star Wars: The Force Awakens." The movie releases in the U.S. on Dec. 18, 2015. (Film Frame/Copyright Lucasfilm 2015 via AP)

has been setting records since its debut Dec. 17. It brought in a galactic \$238 million in North America over its opening weekend, besting previous record-setter "Jurassic World," and set international opening-weekend records in Australia, New Zealand and throughout Europe. It scored the biggest worldwide debut with \$529 million. It also topped \$100 million in IMAX screenings

in 10 days, another global record.

"You almost have to rewrite all the record books for this movie," box office analyst Paul Dergarabedian of Rentrak said. "It's absolutely mind-blowing that 'Star Wars' could get to a billion dollars in 12 days and it hasn't even opened in China, the second biggest movie market in the world."

The power of "Star Wars"

meant the rest of the week's releases were competing for second place. That prize went to the Paramount comedy "Daddy's Home," which opened with \$38.8 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. David O. Russell's new drama starring Jennifer Lawrence, "Joy," debuted in third place with \$17.5 million.

A flurry of new films also opened in the top 10 this

weekend. "Concussion," the Will Smith-NFL drama, took in \$11 million, good for sixth place, followed by the financial-crisis saga "The Big Short," which collected \$10.5 million. The remake of "Point Break" opened with \$10.2 million. And Quentin Tarantino's latest film, "The Hateful Eight," debuted in 10th place with \$4.5 million. A juggernaut like "Star Wars" empowers the entire industry, Dergarabedian said.

"It's great for the audiences, great for studios and theater owners in particular who can point to this and say the movie theater industry is as viable and relevant as it's ever been," he said.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. "Star Wars: The Force Awakens," \$153.5 million. □

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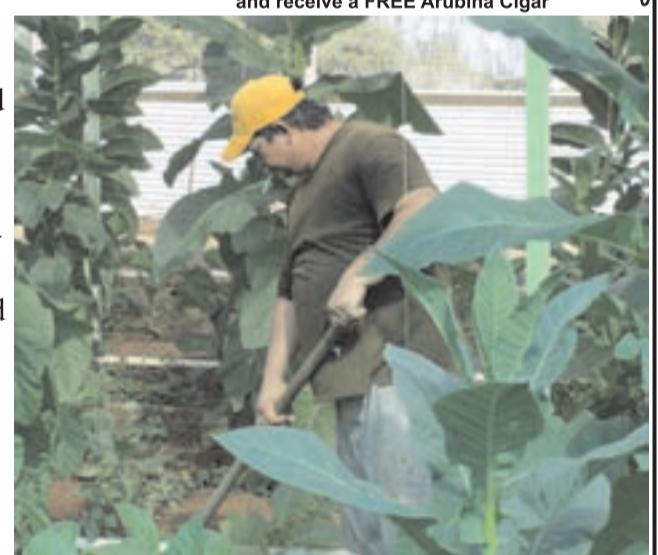
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# Film Review: '45 Years' a devastating time bomb

**JAKE COYLE**  
**AP Film Writer**

How many great movies could be written across the enigmatic, profound face of Charlotte Rampling? Hundreds? Thousands? At any rate, Andrew Haigh's "45 Years" is one of them.

In it, Rampling stars as half of a childless couple — Kate and Geoff (Tom Courtenay) Mercer — preparing to celebrate their 45th anniversary. In minutes, we can already feel jealousy welling in us from snapshots of their peace-

ful, harmonious lives in rural England: dog walks, drinking tea and taking leisurely trips into town. That such appearances of elderly tranquility are not what they seem is one of the notions upended by "45 Years." A letter ar-



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This photo provided by Agatha A. Nitecka shows Tom Courtenay, left, as Geoff and Charlotte Rampling as Kate in Andrew Haigh's film, "45 Years," a Sundance Selects release.

(Courtesy of Agatha A. Nitecka via AP)

rives for Geoff with startling news that the frozen body of the woman he dated before meeting Kate has been found in a Swiss glacier where she died in an accident while traveling with Geoff more than 50 years ago. "Like something in the freezer," mumbles an astonished Geoff.

"She'd look like what she did in 1962," he says. "And I look like this."

The news unsettles Geoff, transporting him back to his mid-20s self, unmooring an iceberg of the past. Confessions follow, revealing a deeper history than Kate was before aware. She watches with increasing alarm as her husband begins smoking again and rummaging around the attic late at night for pictures of his old flame. Their previously rock-solid relationship is suddenly beset with fissures and tremors erupted by a history that isn't so ancient, after all.

Haigh, who is 42, has made the HBO series "Looking" and the excellent independent film "Weekend." That movie dealt with two gay men whose one-night stand is extended across a weekend, during which a remarkable intimacy

accumulates as they examine their night together and contemplate their connection.

For Haigh, relationships are forged in a moment, crystallized in the circumstances of their beginnings. Kate and Geoff may be in their 70s, but their marriage is still built upon — and haunted by — whatever brought them together in their 20s. Old age has done far less to change them than most would think.

The devastating power of "45 Years," which Haigh adapted from David Constantine's short story "In Another Country," lies in the director's sensitive understanding of relationships: of the conversations that take place over pillows and the quiet contemplation of fates abandoned in marriage.

But it's Haigh's tremendous lead actors that make the movie. They're a convincing couple: Courtenay is absent-minded and untidy; Rampling is cool and controlled. As Kate sees a new rival to her husband rise from the dead, the anxieties and confusions flicker across Rampling's face. Turmoil stirs beneath her chilly stillness. □

## Miracle Mops to movie stars: The real Joy dishes on 'Joy'

**JOCELYN NOVECK**  
AP National Writer

**NEW YORK (AP)** — So then there was that time that Joy Mangano, "Miracle Mop" inventor and home shopping entrepreneur, was sitting at a meeting wedged between Jennifer Lawrence and Robert De Niro. And De Niro leaned over and said: "Joy, I have to talk to you. I have such a great idea for a product!" Mangano continues the story, laughing: "And Jennifer is on the other side and she says, 'Bob, you can't ask her that. Everybody asks her that!'" She won't say what the product idea was, but allows that when things eventually calm down with the movie, she and Bob will probably get around to discussing it.

Late-night meetings with movie stars — oh yes, Bradley Cooper was there, too — isn't something Mangano ever envisioned, but life changed a few years back when she got a call telling her of plans for "Joy." The movie, directed by David O. Russell, tells the inspirational tale of a tenacious Long Island mother who could barely support her family and then had one great idea — that self-wringing mop — that launched an empire.

But Mangano, 59, thinks the movie — on which she serves as executive producer — has a much more universal message that applies equally to women and men: "Be courageous to do what you're passionate

about and know instinctively you should be doing, because if you don't, you'll never have that achievement that you know is within you," she says.

Mangano sat down last week to discuss her life and the film. The interview has been edited for clarity and length.

AP: How did you first hear about plans for "Joy"?

Mangano: The telephone rings and it's a producer (whom Mangano had met years earlier), and he says, 'Hi, Joy, we're here because we're going to make a movie about your life story.'

And then David called, and I remember it was in the afternoon, and he said 'I just want to talk for a few minutes,' and when we hung up it was absolutely pitch black out. And that was the beginning of many hundreds of hours of talking. He knows more about me than anybody in the world — I would never need therapy!"

AP: What do you think he found unique about your story?

Mangano: I've always had this inner resiliency. I grew up in an Italian family in an era where it was, 'When are you gonna get married and have children?' And throughout life, I was always taking care of everyone around me. And through the course of that, I lost ... I think we lose what we ARE. And then to find that again, and to go against all odds and have



Inventor Joy Mangano attends the world premiere of "Joy" at the Ziegfeld Theatre in New York. The movie is based on Mangano's life and she serves as executive producer.

(Evan Agostini/Invision/AP)

the courage to keep doing that — I wish everybody could be able to find that space within themselves. I feel like I grew wings when that happened!

AP: The movie is based on you but also some other businesswomen. Is it accurate about your life?

Mangano: I will say that I SEVERELY inspire the movie. How many women do you know who invented the Miracle Mop?

AP: In the movie, Joy goes to QVC with her mop but it doesn't sell — until she insists that she herself go on camera to pitch it.

Mangano: Yes, it was my own determination to say: 'Put ME on with that mop,

and the mop will sell.'

AP: So now you're making a new version of the Miracle Mop?

Mangano: Yes and I can promise you, the only thing harder than inventing is reinventing. I was possessed to keep this mop at the original price — \$19.95 — and I promise when you see it, you'll see why I say it should be \$50. I'm telling you, you're gonna sing and dance with this mop — even if you don't buy it!

AP: What do you think of Jennifer Lawrence playing you?

Mangano: What an honor, right? She has one of the wittiest minds. Within 10 minutes we were finishing each

other's sentences. When we met — I don't know that I've told anybody this, but she looks at me, and my (three adult) children, and says, 'I've never seen a family as close as you all are. It reminds me of my family.' That's something a 25-year old doesn't always pick up on.

AP: What do you most want people to take away from the film?

Mangano: I've had so many people saying afterward, 'There's something I was going to do and I never did, and now I'm gonna do it.' I feel like people are going to want to climb mountains when they get out of this movie. □



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